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Suggested is the serious consideration of recommendations by all persons and agencies concerned with a realistic revision of the State-aid pattern aimed at meeting today's educational needs. Data and emphases relate to factors characteristic of large cities. Cost data are based on current practice, with its financial limitations.

Recommendations include: that the higher costs of trade and technical education programs for handicapped children be reflected in funds for kindergarten, elementary, and secondary programs; that the state's share of financial support for public schools be based on the current statewide average cost per pupil; that State aid be provided to cover the added costs of education for the culturally disadvantaged; that in the computation of building aid, the aid ratio be applied to total school site costs; that the cost of programs to achieve racial balance in the schools be supported by State aid; and that support be given to permissive legislation which would make possible fiscal responsibility and independence for boards of education in cities of over 125,000 population.

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of

LARGE CITY BOARDS OF EDUCATION

OF NEW YORK STATE

AN

ANALYSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL AND FINANCIAL NEEDS

OF

LARGE CITIES IN NEW YORK STATE

WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR

REVISION OF THE STATE AID FORMULAS

September

1964

Office of Education-EEOP

Research and Materials Branch

Bennett O. Stalvey

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THE CONFERENCE OF LARGE CITY BOARDS OF EDUCATION

RECOMMENDS

1. Pupil Weightings

THAT THE HIGHER COSTS OF TRADE AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND OF PROGRAMS FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN BE REFLECTED IN THE STATE AID FORMULA WHICH NOW PROVIDES FOR DIFFERENCES IN COSTS FOR KINDERGARTEN, ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY PROGRAMS

and

THAT STATE AID BE PROVIDED ON THE SAME BASIS AS REGULAR DAY SCHOOL FOR SUMMER SCHOOLS AND FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY ADULT PROGRAMS

2. Shared-Cost Ceiling

THAT THE STATE'S SHARE OF SUPPORT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS BE BASED ON CURRENT STATE-WIDE AVERAGE COST PER PUPIL

3. Culturally Disadvantaged

THAT STATE AID BE PROVIDED TO COVER THE ADDED COSTS OF EDUCATING THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

4. Building Aid

THAT, IN THE COMPUTATION OF BUILDING AID, THE AID RATIO BE APPLIED TO TOTAL SCHOOL SITE COSTS

5. Effect of Other Governmental Costs on Ability

THAT RECOGNITION BE GIVEN TO THE FACT THAT THE ABILITY TO SUPPORT PUBLIC EDUCATION IS REDUCED IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS WHEREIN THE COSTS FOR NON-SCHOOL GOVERNMENTAL PURPOSES ARE RELATIVELY HIGH

6. Effects of Exempt Property on Ability

THAT THE EFFECT OF EXEMPT PROPERTY ON THE FINANCIAL ABILITY OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS BE RECOGNIZED IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF STATE AID

7. Improvement of Quality

THAT ADDITIONAL FUNDS BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR EXPERIMENTATION AND RESEARCH DESIGNED TO UPGRADE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

8. Racial Balance

THAT THE COST OF PROGRAMS TO ACHIEVE RACIAL BALANCE IN THE SCHOOLS BE SUPPORTED BY STATE AID

9. Fiscal Independence

THAT SUPPORT BE GIVEN TO PERMISSIVE LEGISLATION WHICH WOULD MAKE POSSIBLE FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND INDEPENDENCE FOR BOARDS OF EDUCATION IN CITIES OF OVER 125,000 POPULATION

CONFERENCE OF LARGE CITY BOARDS OF EDUCATION OF NEW YORK STATE

An Analysis of the Educational and Financial Needs of Large Cities in New York State with Recommendations for Revision of the State Aid Formulas

Purpose of the Report

It is the purpose of this report to make available to all who are concerned with more adequate and equitable support of education in our State —

1. An analysis of the critical educational and financial problems and needs which characterize the large cities in particular
2. The results of research which document these problems and needs
3. Recommendations for changes in the state aid pattern aimed at equitably meeting the needs of all types of district including the large cities

The recommendations and supporting data included herein represent the joint efforts of the six boards of education, their superintendents and staffs, and are based on intensive research, numerous conferences, and much thoughtful deliberation. We sincerely urge the serious consideration of these recommendations by all persons and agencies concerned with a realistic revision of the state aid pattern aimed at meeting today's educational needs today.

In particular, we urge the serious consideration of these recommendations and supporting data by the Governor, the Legislature, and the State Education Department.

The Conference is quite aware that educational and financial needs of various kinds exist in all types of district. While much of the data and emphasis in this report relate to factors which are particularly characteristic of the large cities, it is our belief that state support should be based on principles of educational and financial need, and the ability to meet these needs, applied equitably regardless of district type. At the same time, it is worthy of note that the six cities represented by this Conference have approximately 55 per cent of the state's population, and educate 41 per cent of the public school children of the state.

Cost data in this report are based on current practice with its present stringent financial limitations, rather than on the cost of operating programs adequate to meet all needs without such financial restrictions. Financial support at all levels, much higher than here proposed, will be essential to meet fully these growing needs.

EFFECTS OF 1962 STATE AID LEGISLATION

The 1962 State Legislature introduced a new state aid concept and made sweeping changes in the old formulas aimed at simplification.

The immediate increase in aid attributable to these changes amounted to $115,000,000 to the school districts in New York State and special aids for building and transportation were retained and extended to the cities for the first time. The extension of building and transportation aid to the cities eliminated long-standing discriminations in the appropriation of these two types of aid. The provision of size correction factors for sparcity and density and making aid available on a current basis constitute other changes which improve the basis for distribution of aid to school districts.

The simplification in the 1962 law was achieved in part by the elimination of "special aids" which long had been accepted as necessary in order to provide for cost variations based on local needs.

Two years' experience with the 1962 law clearly indicates the need for refinement and modification of the radically new formulas for distribution of state aid, if the varying needs of New York State school districts are to be served equitably.

THE SHARED-COST FORMULA

As a result of its studies, the Joint Legislative Committee recommended abandonment of the state's old foundation program, which included special aids, and in its place recommended adoption of a new state aid plan which makes the cost-sharing principle the basis for distribution of state aid. Essential elements of the program are:

1. A new principle of state-local sharing of all approved operating expenses up to $500 per pupil in weighted average daily attendance (WADA). Under this plan it is presumed that a district may choose its own foundation level, provide the programs deemed necessary within the district and enjoy state support for a district's educational program up to the $500 figure.
2. The extent to which the state shares in the cost of the program is determined by an aid ratio which is so designed that a district of average wealth will be reimbursed for 49 per cent of its operating expenses up to $500 per WADA. Districts with greater than average wealth and less than average wealth will have respectively lower and higher aid ratios.
3. This same aid ratio is applied to approved capital outlay and debt service expenditures for building construction or reconstruction, and was made available for the first time to city school districts.
4. The state provides 90 percent of the cost of approved transportation expenditures to all school districts including city districts except

that such aid to city districts was 30 per cent in the first year, 60 per cent in the second year and 90 per cent in the third year.

5. Correction factors for sparcity and density have been provided and aid to school districts is adjusted to pupil attendance in the current year.

LIMITATIONS IN SHARED-COST FORMULA

While the shared-cost principle is an apparently simple and direct approach, it cannot, without qualification and adaptation, provide aid consistent with the varying needs of diverse pupil populations and the substantial drain on the real property tax dollar required to provide other essential governmental services in the big cities.

For example, while the new formula is intended to provide greater flexibility and freedom for local adaptation within the $500 ceiling, in those districts wherein there exists a much higher than average requirement for programs in vocational and technical training, for the physically and mentally handicapped and for the culturally disadvantaged, such "flexibility" and "freedom" is very seriously restricted. To disregard the fact that such needs are concentrated in the large cities by failing to provide weightings consistent with the actual cost differences which exist in providing these programs, represents a serious shortcoming in the present formula for distribution of state aid.

The shared-cost formula completely disregards variations in types of program needed and offered in the school districts. It recognizes, for example, by continuing the long-established weightings, that the costs of kindergarten vs. elementary vs. secondary education vary, but it disregards the similar variations in cost of extensive handicapped programs, required by law, and, in fact, eliminates special aid for such programs which was previously available. It gives no consideration to the higher cost of trade and technical education.

Likewise, it should be clear that the much higher expenditures required for such services as police protection, fire protection, sanitation and health services, substantially reduce real property tax monies available for education in urban districts. To base an aid ratio formula on full value of real property behind each pupil without adjusting for the very wide differences in costs for such services among school districts seriously impairs the operation of the formula and results in a marked inequity in districts wherein the cost of other governmental services are substantially in excess of the average of such costs in school districts across the state.

As long as "ability to pay" or "effort" is measured solely by full property value per pupil, the needs of the tax limit cities cannot be met. Disregard of the cost of other services, the large amount of exempt property, and the constitutional tax limit, makes invalid the use of real property value per pupil as a sole measure of ability to finance education in the big cities.

In addition, the present shared-cost ceiling of $500, represents the median operating expenditure per pupil in 1960-61. Such a ceiling should be adjusted each year to keep pace with the actual increases which occur.

Current expenditures per WADA amounted to $600 in 1962-63 in New York State and are estimated at $630 per pupil in 1963-64.

To hold the ceiling of $500 constant, in the face of actual current expenditures substantially in excess of this figure, precludes effective application of the cost-sharing principle.

In brief, therefore, while the shared-cost principle may have much to commend it as a logical starting point in construction of state aid formulas, we submit that it cannot equitably serve the widely-varying needs in New York State without such adaptations as are here recommended.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Pupil Weightings

THAT THE HIGHER COSTS OF TRADE AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND OF PROGRAMS FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN BE REFLECTED IN THE STATE AID FORMULA WHICH NOW PROVIDES FOR DIFFERENCES IN COSTS FOR KINDERGARTEN, ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY PROGRAMS

and

THAT STATE AID BE PROVIDED ON THE SAME BASIS AS REGULAR DAY SCHOOL FOR SUMMER SCHOOLS AND FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY ADULT PROGRAMS

We urge further refinement of the basic formula, using the long-accepted principle of pupil weightings, to include appropriate provision for the higher cost of educational programs for the handicapped, and for trade and technical education as indicated below.

After long study, the Diefendorf Committee concluded that equitable treatment of the various school districts would require the retention of "special aids" for transportation and buildings. We assume that the reason for retaining these "special aids", in the face of the effort to eliminate all "special aids", was the finding that the needs and corresponding expenditures for these items vary so widely among districts as to require this differential treatment in the interest of equity.

Table I shows net cost by instruction area for the Big Six cities for programs of education required and to be provided for in 1964-65. It should be noted that in comparison to the costs of programs of education in grades 1-6, it costs more than twice as much to provide for trade and technical programs, more than three times as much to provide for

physically and mentally handicapped programs and more than five times as much to provide for severely mentally retarded programs.

TABLE I

NET COSTS PER PUPIL IN BIG SIX CITIES[1]

Gross Costs Less State Aid by Areas of Instruction

1 Instruction Area	2 Net Cost by Instruction Area	3 1963-64 ADA (est.)	4 Net Cost Per Pupil (Col. 2 ÷ by Col. 3)	5 Indicated Ratios (Gr. 1-6=1.00)
Kindergarten	$ 28,039,665	86,839	$ 323	.69
Grades 1-6	243,338,739	525,227	463	1.00
Grades 7-12	273,150,440	439,263	622	1.34
Trade and Technical	45,739,780	44,869	1,019	2.20
Physically and Mentally Handicapped	34,874,808	20,025	1,742	3.76
Severely Mentally Retarded and Emotionally Disturbed	13,396,459	3,828	3,500	7.55

[1]Net Per Pupil costs computed in accordance with formula supplied by the State Education Department for computing maximum allowable tuition charges.
(Division of School Business Management Bulletin, Vol. 10, No. 3)
Composite averages for Buffalo, New York City, Rochester, Syracuse and Yonkers.

While the shared-cost formula recognizes cost differences which exist between kindergarten, grades 1-6 and grades 7-12 by providing weightings of .50, 1.00 and 1.25 respectively for such programs, the actual cost differences which are shown in the above table for trade and technical, physically and mentally handicapped and severely retarded programs are not similarly recognized.

It is our firm belief that the concentration of educational programs for the handicapped and culturally deprived, and of trade and technical education in the large cities exemplifies a similar wide variation among districts with respect to needs and costs, likewise requiring differential treatment.

The objectives of simplification, and elimination of special aids can thus be achieved within the framework of the present formula pattern which has long included different weightings for kindergarten, elementary, and secondary pupils.

In order to provide for more equitable state sharing of the higher costs of trade and technical, handicapped programs and the higher cost of summer, evening and adult programs, it is recommended that

an adjustment in operating aid and growth aid, as presently computed, be made by the addition of that percent by which "Weighted Average Daily Attendance" (WADA) is increased using the following proposed weightings.

This proposal makes no change in the weighting currently used in determining the aid ratio and growth aid. The proposal does provide for an adjustment of operating expenses aid and growth aid based on relative costs.

WEIGHTINGS

	Present	Proposed
Kindergarten	.50	.50
Grades 1-6, regular day school	1.00	1.00
" " summer school[1]	0.00	1.00
Grades 7-12, general education, regular day school	1.25	1.25
" " summer school[1]	0.00	1.25
Grades 9-12, full-time trade and technical[2], regular day school	1.25	2.25
" " full-time trade and technical[2], summer school[1]	0.00	2.25
Grades 1-6, mentally retarded and physically handicapped	1.00	3.00
Grades 7-12, mentally retarded and physically handicapped	1.25	3.00
Grades 1-6, severely mentally retarded and emotionally disturbed	1.00	5.00
Grades 7-12, severely mentally retarded and emotionally disturbed	1.25	5.00
Grades 1-12, adult[1]	0.00	1.25

[1]Nine hundred ninety clock hours of student attendance, at summer and evening schools, is the equivalent of one average daily attendance (WADA).

[2]As defined in Commissioner's Regulations, Section 190.

Concentration of Special Programs in Large Cities

The extent to which special programs for the mentally retarded and physically handicapped, and in trade and technical education are concentrated in the large cities is shown in the actual enrollment figures for 1962-63 below. It may be noted that classes for the mentally retarded, the severely retarded, and the physically handicapped are now required by law and that programs for the emotionally disturbed are mandated in 1966.

	Big Six Cities Total	Balance of State Total
Full-Time Trade and Technical Pupils	43,539	14,388
Mentally Retarded and Physically Handicapped Pupils	21,596	19,990

(Data provided by State Education Department)

It should be noted that 75.1 percent of the pupils enrolled in full-time trade and technical programs which cost in excess of twice as much as programs in grades 1-6 and 51.9 percent of the students enrolled in mentally retarded and physically handicapped classes, which cost in excess of three times as much as programs in grades 1-6, were being carried on in the Big Six cities in 1962-63. In other words, this concentration of specialized programs exists in just six of all the districts in the state.

2. Shared-Cost Ceiling

THAT THE STATE'S SHARE OF SUPPORT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS BE BASED ON CURRENT STATE-WIDE AVERAGE COST PER PUPIL

The shared-cost ceiling in a given year should be equal to the average state-wide per pupil expenditure in the preceding year. To limit state sharing to the $500 ceiling will result in discouraging efforts to maintain, or to improve the quality and services necessary. The net current expenditures per pupil in weighted average daily attendance (WADA) in 1962-63, as reported by the Education Department, were $600, and the Education Department estimates that such current expenditures per WADA for 1963-64 will amount to $630.

Since the shared-cost formula provides for an annual adjustment to the average wealth behind each pupil as a significant factor in determining the state's share of current expenditures, it would likewise appear logical and consistent to adjust to the average per pupil expenditures per WADA in the base year as an appropriate ceiling factor.

To continue the $500 ceiling in the face of average expenditures substantially in excess of this figure penalizes many school districts, discourages efforts to improve quality, and is inconsistent with the cost-sharing principle.

3. Culturally Disadvantaged

THAT STATE AID BE PROVIDED TO COVER THE ADDED COSTS OF EDUCATING THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

There is a concentration of culturally disadvantaged pupils in the large cities. These pupils require extensive and expensive educational programs to compensate for their environmental deficiencies.

Only a limited number of programs have thus far been provided for such pupils. Precise cost data, sufficient to support recommendations for pupil weightings in the basic formula are not yet available. The need, however, is present and critical.

The Conference, therefore, recommends that funds be made available to the Commissioner of Education to support approved programs specially designed to meet the needs of culturally disadvantaged pupils.

4. Building Aid

THAT IN THE COMPUTATION OF BUILDING AID, THE AID RATIO BE APPLIED TO TOTAL SCHOOL SITE COSTS

TABLE II

PER ACRE SCHOOL SITE COSTS IN THE BIG SIX CITIES OF NEW YORK STATE

1957-1963

City	Average Cost Per Acre
Albany	$ 82,143
Buffalo	124,951
New York City	204,824
Rochester	66,105
Syracuse	24,339
Yonkers	20,808
Big Six Composite Average	87,195
Non-City School Districts in N. Y. State[1]	1,355

[1]Based on a random selection of per acre site costs for twenty-five non-city school districts furnished by the Division of Buildings and Grounds of The State Education Department

TABLE III

SITE COSTS AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION COSTS IN THE BIG SIX CITIES OF NEW YORK STATE

1956-1962

City	School Site Costs	Total School Construction Costs	Percent that Site Cost is of Total Construction Cost
Albany	$ 575,000	$ 3,613,112	15.9
Buffalo	1,850,022	9,831,482	18.8
New York City[1]	54,278,362	337,593,920	14.4
Rochester	2,726,848	18,237,284	14.9
Syracuse	736,987	7,085,503	10.4
Yonkers	491,500	8,051,511	6.1
Composite Percent for the Big Six Cities			15.7
Average Percent for Non-City School Districts in New York State[2]			2.5

[1]Does not include estimated costs of donated sites.

[2]Based on a random selection of site costs and total construction costs for twenty-five non-city school districts furnished by the Division of Buildings and Grounds of the State Education Department.

That the cost for sites in the large urban school districts is many times the cost of sites in non-urban school districts, based on the actual record, is clearly indicated by the fact that the average per acre costs in urban districts was $87,195 compared to $1355 in non-urban school districts, and further that the percent of site costs to total construction costs in the city school districts was 15.7 compared to 2.5 in non-city school districts.

To ignore these very substantial cost differences in site acquisition creates a serious obstacle to providing adequate facilities within ceiling limits in districts with high site costs.

The case for the elimination of site costs from the building ceiling limitations and the application of the aid ratio to total expenditures for site is clear and pressing.

5. Effect of Other Governmental Costs on Ability

THAT RECOGNITION BE GIVEN TO THE FACT THAT THE ABILITY TO SUPPORT PUBLIC EDUCATION IS REDUCED IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS WHEREIN THE COSTS FOR NON-SCHOOL GOVERNMENTAL PURPOSES ARE RELATIVELY HIGH

Table IV shows that the total expense for operation and maintenance of the non-school governmental departments in the Big Six is correspondingly higher than such expense in governmental units outside of the Big Six cities. The difference in 1964-65 amounts to 23.8 percent.

The costs of governmental services, other than education, tend to increase with the size of a district and reach very large proportions in the major cities where many services are rendered to non-residents as well as residents. Police and fire protection, sanitation services, and maintenance of streets are examples of the services to which a greater portion of the large city tax dollar must be committed than is the case in most of the smaller districts. The ability of the large city to support education is thus reduced.

Table V provides a similar comparison of non-school expense with total governmental expense.

TABLE IV

PERCENT OF LOCAL PROPERTY TAXES IN THE BIG SIX CITIES OF THE STATE USED FOR NON-SCHOOL PURPOSES

1964-65

City	Total Tax Levy	Non-School Levy	Percent
Albany[1]	$ 16,555,715	$ 10,612,892	64.4
Buffalo	67,804,537	52,049,870	76.7
New York City	1,309,086,131	998,601,346	76.3
Rochester	48,111,015	29,218,780	60.7
Syracuse	31,308,247	20,523,751	65.6
Yonkers	30,966,912	19,652,645	63.4
Composite Percent for the Big Six Cities			75.1
All Local Governments, Excluding Big Six[2]			51.3

TABLE V

NON-SCHOOL EXPENSE COMPARED WITH TOTAL GOVERNMENTAL EXPENSE OF THE BIG SIX CITIES OF NEW YORK STATE, 1964-65

City	Total Payments	Non-School Functions	Percent
Albany[1]	$ 16,811,651	$ 8,302,369	49.0
Buffalo	77,774,318	42,074,318	54.0
New York City	2,940,343,778	2,146,756,779	73.0
Rochester	65,333,520	33,663,664	51.5
Syracuse	38,754,448	21,748,002	56.1
Yonkers	36,615,573	22,395,573	61.1
Composite	$3,175,633,288	$2,274,940,705	71.6
All Local Governments, Excluding Big Six[2]			50.6

[1]1963-64 budget

[2]For fiscal years ended in 1962. Source: Special Reports on Municipal Affairs, State Comptroller, March 1963.

The magnitude of the problem of providing adequately for the educational needs in the Big Six cities becomes even more clear when consideration is given to the tax efforts being made in 1964-65 in these cities in relation to the constitutional limitations on taxing authority for operation and maintenance purposes. The cost of providing all essential governmental functions, including education, must be met within such limitations.

Table VI shows the total tax ability of each city under the constitutional limitation, the total taxes levied on real property, and the percent of total tax ability used in 1964-65.

It should be noted that the six largest cities of the state, all fiscally dependent, are presently using 95.53 percent to 99.94 percent of total taxing ability. It should be apparent, therefore, that these municipalities are continuing to make the "maximum effort" permitted by the state constitution.

TABLE VI

TAX LEEWAY FOR CURRENT EXPENSE IN THE BIG SIX CITIES IN NEW YORK STATE, 1964-65

City	Tax Limitation in Percent	Total Tax Ability	Total Taxes Levied For Current Expense	Percent Total Tax Ability Used
Albany[1]	2	$ 14,059,620	$ 13,513,597	96.11
Buffalo	2	43,156,830	41,229,323	95.53
New York City	2.5	858,415,519	857,250,868	99.86
Rochester	2	31,536,503	31,520,000	99.94
Syracuse	2	22,463,131	22,262,396	99.10
Yonkers	2	18,939,477	18,929,250	99.94
Total		$988,571,080	$984,705,434	99.60

[1]1963-64 budget

[2]For fiscal years ended in 1962. Source: Special Reports on Municipal Affairs, State Comptroller, March 1963

Since effort is thus limited by law, the amount of taxes on property raised by these cities is not a valid measure of either community effort or the willingness of the citizenry to respond to educational needs.

6. Effects of Exempt Property on Ability

THAT THE EFFECTS OF EXEMPT PROPERTY ON THE FINANCIAL ABILITY OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS BE RECOGNIZED IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF STATE AID

Table VII shows that portion of the total real property in each of the large city school districts which is on the tax roll in 1964-65, that portion of total real property in each district which is tax-free, and the total assessed value of property in each district. The tax exempt property constitutes such real property as that of federal, state, county and other governmental units and the property of social, charitable, and religious bodies located within a district. The high

concentration of such agencies within the large cities and in some other districts, results in the loss of a very substantial proportion of the potential taxable wealth, notwithstanding the necessity of providing all required municipal services to such agencies with the attendant additional costs involved.

It should be noted that exempt property constitutes approximately one-fifth to more than two-fifths of the real property in these large city school districts.

To the extent that the amount of exempt property in a given district is in excess of the state-wide average percentage of exempt property in school districts in New York State, corresponding adjustments should be made in the determination of local ability in the computation of the aid ratio.

TABLE VII

ASSESSED VALUATION OF REAL PROPERTY BY TYPE AND AMOUNT IN THE BIG SIX CITIES OF NEW YORK STATE

1964-1965

City	Non-Exempt Property	Exempt Property	Total Real Property	Percent Exempted
Albany	$ 293,357,160	$ 253,764,059	$ 547,121,219	46.3
Buffalo	1,036,631,610	458,371,972	1,495,003,582	30.6
New York City	29,752,740,109	14,441,532,279	44,194,272,388	32.6
Rochester	689,060,912	184,055,886	873,116,798	21.0
Syracuse	412,258,792	161,468,026	573,726,818	28.1
Yonkers	576,832,792	190,817,269	767,650,061	24.8

Recognizing the inadequacy of available data on the actual value of exempt property in the various districts, we would urge that appropriate agencies of the State government move to obtain up-to-date valuations of such property to the end that the wide variations in this measure of local ability may be recognized in connection with state financial assistance.

7. Improvement of Quality

THAT ADDITIONAL FUNDS BE MADE AVAILABLE AT STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS FOR EXPERIMENTATION AND RESEARCH DESIGNED TO UPGRADE THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The impact of the swift changes and innovations being introduced into our culture by our accelerating technology together with the rapid

accumulation of new knowledge requires increasing adaptation and more vigorous evaluation of the structure, processes and products of education.

8. Racial Balances

THAT THE COST OF PROGRAMS TO ACHIEVE RACIAL BALANCE IN THE SCHOOLS BE SUPPORTED BY STATE AID

It is clear that the carrying out of plans to achieve better racial balance in the schools involves substantial additional costs to the districts concerned. To accomplish these objectives in New York State will place an undue burden on a relatively few districts. The State should therefore give full financial support to local efforts.

9. Fiscal Independence

THAT SUPPORT BE GIVEN TO PERMISSIVE LEGISLATION WHICH WOULD MAKE POSSIBLE FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND INDEPENDENCE FOR BOARDS OF EDUCATION IN CITIES OF OVER 125,000 POPULATION

With the exception of the Big Six cities, all school districts in New York State are fiscally independent of their municipal governments. Consistent with the well-established principle that citizens at the local level should retain as much direct control as possible, it is logical and appropriate that the six fiscally dependent school districts be permitted their choice in this matter.

SUMMARY

It has been the purpose of the foregoing analysis and legislative recommendations to point out some of the inadequacies of the present state laws relating to support of education. These inadequacies result largely from the failure of the present state aid formulas to recognize such basic differences among districts as:

The varying nature and needs of pupil populations and the corresponding cost variations of programs to meet these needs.

The wide variations in demand on the tax dollar for governmental services other than schools.

The relative amount of tax exempt property not available as a source of local tax revenue.

The great range in building site costs.

Constitutional tax limits.

The 1962 state aid law, which introduced new concepts and procedures, falls short of recognizing the differences in local ability and need reviewed in this report. As might be expected with any radical change in the complex area of state finance, experience has shown the necessity for such refinements in the law as are here recommended. The Conference of Large City Boards of Education of New York State urges full support of these recommendations by the Governor, the Legislature, the State Education Department and by all others concerned with the improvement of educational opportunity in New York State.